

Governance of course changes and course closure

Higher education courses run by London Academy for Applied Technology and validated by Plymouth Marjon University

Submitted by: **London Academy for Applied Technology (“LAAT”)**

Validating partner: **Plymouth Marjon University (“PMU” / “Marjon”)**

1. Purpose and scope

This document gives the Office for Students (OfS) evidence of how we manage changes to, and the closing of, the higher education courses we run. London Academy for Applied Technology (LAAT) runs these courses in partnership with Plymouth Marjon University, which validates them.

Plymouth Marjon University (PMU) awards the qualifications, so it is responsible for the academic standards of those awards and for the quality of teaching across the partnership. Because of this, changing or closing a course follows PMU’s published quality rules, which we work within. PMU requires its partners to use quality checks that match those approved by its governing body, Senate. This document explains those rules and shows that students are protected at every stage.

2. The governing framework

The way we manage course changes and closures is set out in three published documents, all approved by PMU’s Senate. These set out the rules behind our courses:

Document	What it covers	Status
Collaborative Provision Regulations and Procedures (CPRP)	Main source. Sets out how course changes and closures are managed and who is responsible.	Version 1.10. Issued by Senate. Effective from October 2025; last amended 11 January 2026.
Programme Modification Processes and Procedures (PMMP)	Sets out the detailed steps for making course changes, including what counts as	Version 1.10. Issued by Senate.

Document	What it covers	Status
	a minor or major change and who approves them.	Effective from September 2025.
Student Protection Plan 2024–2026 (SPP)	Sets out how students are protected if a course changes, closes, or the partnership ends.	Approved by the OfS. Required under OfS condition C3. Updated December 2024; next review spring 2026.

All courses must follow PMU’s rules and the OfS conditions of registration, including the B conditions and the E8 condition on sub-contracting. The day-to-day link between the two organisations is handled by an Academic Liaison Tutor appointed by PMU.

3. How course changes are managed

3.1 The route in the Collaborative Provision Regulations

Section 4.7 of the CPRP, “Modification to Approved Provision”, covers two situations. In both, PMU keeps control:

- **Changes we are consulted on.** For PMU’s own courses, the Academic Liaison Tutor tells us about any proposed change before it is submitted, and the request must confirm that we have been consulted. Once the change is approved, the tutor gives us the updated official course documents.
- **Changes to courses validated by PMU.** For our courses that PMU validates (including dual awards), changes follow PMU’s rules. The Academic Liaison Tutor, working with PMU’s Quality and Academic Standards Unit, checks the proposed change to make sure it still meets PMU’s requirements and that the course’s aims and learning outcomes are still met. This check is recorded on a standard form. Once approved, the Quality and Academic Standards Unit gives us the updated official course documents — the module descriptions and course specification before the change is made.

Every change is recorded in the Academic Liaison Tutor’s Annual Report giving a clear record that can be checked. The key safeguard for the OfS is that no change takes effect with us until PMU has formally approved it and issued updated official course documents.

3.2 The detailed change-control rules (Programme Modification Processes and Procedures)

The CPRP process runs through PMU's Programme Modification Processes and Procedures, which apply to courses delivered through partnerships. The safeguards are:

Safeguard	What it means for our courses
Only minor changes can use this route	Minor changes cover the pattern of assessment, module learning outcomes, content and ways of teaching. Anything that affects the overall aims or outcomes of a course, or a change of title, pausing or closing a course, is a major change and cannot use this route.
Limits on how much can change before a full review	For partnership courses, each course is reviewed in full every five years. Changes are limited to 60 credits per level, 80 credits per year, and 120 credits in total across the five years. Going over any of these limits triggers an early full review instead of a simple change.
Consultation is required	The Programme Leader must consult the teaching team and others affected, including students through the Programme Voice Panel and the External Examiner, and must submit evidence of this with the request.
Central approval and record	First approval comes from the Academic Director. Formal approval comes from the University Modification Forum, chaired by the Academic Registrar, who reports to the Academic Strategy, Planning and Partnerships Committee. The Quality and Academic Standards Unit updates the official course documents and keeps the record.

If students have already enrolled or accepted a place when a change is made, the Programme Leader must contact everyone affected and tell them about the change, with a signed list submitted to the Modification Forum as proof. The Student Protection Plan also commits PMU to giving students at least 45 days' written notice of any important change to a course, module or teaching location.

4. How course closure is managed

Closing a course or ending the partnership is covered by Section 12 of the CPRP, "Termination of Collaborative Provision", backed up by the review and quality-concern steps elsewhere in the rules. Who decides and how is set at senior level:

- **Notice. The notice needed to end the partnership is set out in the written agreement between PMU and us.**

- **Who decides.** The final decision to end the partnership or close a course rests with PMU's Vice-Chancellor, or someone they appoint.
- **How it is agreed and carried out.** Closure is normally agreed after discussion between PMU's Vice-Chancellor (or their appointee) and our Chief Executive (or their appointee). Once agreed, PMU formally tells us straight away and puts a Termination Action Plan into effect.
- **How it is monitored.** The Termination Action Plan is monitored by the Strategic Partnership Board, the Academic Strategy, Planning and Partnerships Committee, and Senate.

Closure does not happen without a reason or proper oversight. If concerns about quality or the student experience come up through yearly monitoring, the Whistleblowing Policy or the Reportable Events Policy, PMU carries out a full investigation and may put an Improvement Plan in place, overseen by the Academic Partnerships Committee. While an Improvement Plan is running, no growth in delivery is allowed. PMU can only end the partnership if improvements are not good enough, or concerns are serious, and in line with the written agreement. At a partnership review, the panel can also recommend that PMU does not continue the partnership, and the Vice-Chancellor can order an extra review where serious concerns arise. Approving any new partner, and authority over partnership-level decisions, rests with Senate and the Board of Governors.

5. How students are protected throughout

Protecting students is built into both the change and closure processes, not added on afterwards. Two rules link this framework directly to the OfS-approved Student Protection Plan:

- **If a partnership ends early, PMU's Student Protection Plan is put into effect to protect students.**
- **If PMU ends a partnership because of serious quality concerns, it makes sure — in line with its Student Protection Plan — that students are protected, including arranging other ways for them to continue their studies.**

The Student Protection Plan, approved by the OfS and required under condition C3, sets out what happens if a partnership course cannot continue. The options are used in this order of preference:

- **Teaching out.** Students already enrolled carry on their studies at the current location wherever possible, with the course's aims and learning outcomes still achievable.
 - **Other ways of teaching.** If the current location is not available, options include moving to PMU's main campus, teaching from hired premises with staff travelling to teach, or studying at a distance.
 - **Transfer.** If other ways of teaching are not possible, PMU helps students move to another PMU course or to another provider — including, where possible, to another course with us — with formal recognition of what they have already achieved.
 - **Telling applicants.** People who have applied are told in line with UCAS deadlines so they have time to find another course.
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The Plan adds specific commitments: if a partner cannot teach at its premises, at least one full academic year's notice is expected and the partner pays the costs of supporting students to the end of their studies; the website and UCAS listings are updated within two working days of a decision to close or pause a course; and at least 45 days' written notice is given of important changes or changes of teaching location. Refunds or compensation are a last resort under the Refund and Compensation Policy, and the OfS is told if the Plan is used.

6. Summary

Together, the documents above show that course changes and closures for our courses are managed from start to finish under PMU's published, Senate-approved framework:

- **Changes are limited to minor ones, capped in size, consulted on with students and the External Examiner, approved centrally through the Modification Forum, and only made once PMU has issued updated official course documents — with anything bigger triggering a full review.**
- **Closure decisions are made at Vice-Chancellor and Senate level, agreed at senior level with us, carried out through a Termination Action Plan, and monitored by three governance bodies.**
- **Students are protected at every stage through the OfS-approved Student Protection Plan — teaching out, other ways of teaching, transfer with recognition of achievement, advance notice, and refund or compensation as a last resort.**

This gives the OfS a complete, documented and checkable process for managing course changes and closures, run through our validating partner and with student protection throughout.
